The Birthday of Dipankara Buddha Honored in Pasadena

On Sunday, September 22, 2024, a gathering was held at the Holy Miracles Temple, Pasadena, CA, to honor the Holy Birthday of Namo Ancient Buddha Dipankara. The event, organized by the World Buddhism Association Headquarters (WBAH), Holy Miracles Temple, and Sanger Mission, took place in the Grand Hall of Shakyamuni Buddha. The ceremony was led by Abbess Ruzun Ruohui of Hua Zang Si Temple. The assembly drew together a diverse congregation of holy gurus, eminent monks, dedicated monastics, Buddhist practitioners, and local residents.

During the Dharma assembly to celebrate the Holy Birthday of Namo Ancient Buddha Dipankara, participants respectfully chanted "The Vajra Prajna Paramita Sutra," performed repentance rituals, and made meal offerings to Buddhas. The assembly's merit was dedicated to honoring the Holy Birthday of Namo Ancient Buddha Dipankara with prayers for the increase of good fortune and wisdom, the elimination of calamity, and the promotion of world peace, prosperity, and harmony.

Dipankara Buddha holds a significant position in the Buddhist tradition. The Buddha Dipankara is considered by practitioners as one of the Buddhas of the past. According to Buddhist traditions, Dipankara Buddha was the nirmanakayas of Dorje Chang Buddha, the primordial buddha, who is credited with originating Buddhism in the dharmadhatu and spreading Buddhist teachings across the three spheres of existence. Traditions also add that Dipankara Buddha once predicted the future Buddhahood for Sumedha, who was a previous life of Shakyamuni Buddha. It was Shakyamuni Buddha who established Buddhism in this Saha world.

The Hall of Ancient Buddha Dipankara at the Holy Miracles Temple is considered by followers a site of profound spiritual significance. Ruzun Ruohui said: “The location of the Hall of Ancient Buddha Dipankara was the site of a Dharma assembly on March 7, 2014, which was held to bless the first edition of the Sutra ‘Expounding the Absolute Truth through the Heart Sutra‘ by H.H. Dorje Chang Buddha III. During which, three-colored nectar was “bestowed from the sky by Buddhas” — I was there and witnessed the whole process happen. The Hall of Ancient Buddha Dipankara was established on this site afterwards. Today we held a Dharma assembly to honor the Holy Birthday of Namo Ancient Buddha Dipankara. We offered lamps and chanted sutras, praying that the light of Buddhism would illuminate the world and bring peace and auspiciousness to the world. May everyone listen to Buddha Dharmas and cultivate accordingly, may your blessings and wisdom increase, and may all go well.”

The Hall of Ancient Buddha Dipankara currently houses an enshrined statue of ancient Buddha Dipankara and offers Buddhists a unique opportunity to make lamp offerings, generating boundless merit. The ritual of offering lamps at this site is believed to bring blessings and fortune.

One of the participants, Mr. Benjamin Hong, shared his thoughts: “After studying and learning about many different religions and ideologies, one of the things I love about Buddhism is its logical consistency. It closely aligns with the philosophical principles of morality and ethics I have studied. With a central tenet built around compassion for others and understanding the law of cause and effect, Buddhism has always been a guiding light, helping me find peace with my place in the world.”

This Dharma assembly honored the legacy of Namo Ancient Buddha Dipankara. It served as a reminder of the profound connection between the ancient teachings and the present-day aspirations of the Buddhist community, uniting participants in a shared vision for a more enlightened and harmonious world.

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